

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method of controlling use of program content, said method
2 comprising:
 - 3 receiving program content;
 - 4 storing said program content in memory;
 - 5 storing a rule for determining whether said program content in memory
6 may be played;
 - 7 receiving a first time out message operable for use with said rule,
8 wherein said first time out message comprises a time out limit indicating a time of day value
9 by which an update message must be received;
 - 10 enforcing said rule by disabling playback of said program content in
11 memory.
- 1 2. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said disabling playback of
2 said program content comprises reducing the quality of the playback of the program content.
- 1 3. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said first time out message
2 comprises a system time of day value.
- 1 4. The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising:
 - 2 synchronizing a client computer to said system time via said system
3 time of day value in said first time out message.
- 1 5. The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:
 - 2 determining a current time of day.
- 1 6. The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising:
 - 2 determining a current time of day using said system time of day value
3 and a local clock of the client computer.

1 7. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said enforcing said rule
2 comprises:

3 determining a current time of day;

4 comparing said current time of day to said time out limit;

5 checking for a second time out message, said second time out message
6 comprising a second system time of day value and a second time out limit;

7 disabling playback of said program content if said second time out
8 message is not received prior to said time out limit.

1 8. The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:

2 receiving a second time message;

3 re-enabling playback of said program content after receipt of said
4 second time out message.

1 9. The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:

2 entering into a digital rights rental agreement to allow receipt of said
3 program content.

1 10. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said disabling playback
2 comprises:

3 disabling playback of some program content while not disabling
4 playback of other program content.

1 11. The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising:

2 synchronizing a local clock to a system clock by utilizing said time of
3 day value.

1 12. The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising:

2 utilizing a local clock and said system time of day value to compute a
3 current time of day.

3 a receiver operable for receiving program content from a content
4 distributor;

5 a memory for storing said program content;

6 code operable for implementing a rule for determining whether said
7 program content in memory may be played;

8 a processor coupled with said memory;

9 code operable for enforcing a rule coupled to said apparatus wherein
10 said rule disables playback of said program content if a time out message is not received prior
11 to a time of day value indicated by a previous time out message.

3 receiving program content from a content distribution server;

4 storing said program content in memory coupled to client computer;

7 receiving a first time message, said first time message comprising a
8 system time of day value and an expiration time of day value;

9 applying said digital rights management rule, wherein said applying
10 comprises:

11 determining a current time of day;

12 comparing said current time of day to said expiration time of
13 day;

14 checking for a second time message, said second time message
15 comprising a second system time of day value and a second expiration time of day value;

1 16. The method as described in claim 15 wherein said disabling playback
2 comprises reducing the quality of the playback of said program content.

17. The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

2 receiving said second time message;

18. The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

1 19. The method as described in claim 15 wherein said disabling playback
2 comprises:

1 20. The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

2 synchronizing a local clock to a system clock.

1 21. The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

utilizing a local clock and a system time message to compute a current time of day.

1 22. The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:

3 a receiver for receiving program content from a content distribution
4 server;

5 memory for storing said program content;

6 code operable for applying a digital rights management rule,
7 wherein said code for applying said rule comprises:

8 code operable for determining a current time of day;

9 code operable for comparing said current time of day to an
10 expiration time of day value received in a first time message, said first time message
11 comprising said expiration time of day value and a system time of day value;

12 code operable for checking for a second time message, said
13 second time message comprising a second system time of day value and a second expiration
14 time of day value;

15 code operable for disabling playback of said program content if
16 said second time message is not received prior to said expiration time of day value.